

St Michael's CE VC Primary School

Let Your Light Shine

Policy for Collective Worship.

September 2024

Our school vision is: Let Your Light Shine which is based on Matthew 5:16 where Jesus says, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." At St Michael's School we provide a safe, happy and inspiring learning environment based around our core values of love, joy, hope and forgiveness. We celebrate the uniqueness of every child, and encourage them to shine in all they do, preparing them for life's journey.

School worship provides essential opportunities for all pupils to understand and enjoy the love God has for them, share their human experience and to develop their spiritual nature. As a local community school St Michael's School aims to be inclusive, and welcomes all children from the neighbourhood, whatever their family faith, if their parents wish an education that is centred on Christian values.

Legal Requirements

St Michael's School is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School. As such it has a trust deed which states that worship should be '**consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England**'. In accordance with legal requirements (School Standards and Framework Act 1988), an Act of Collective Worship is provided every day. Collective worship is organised in a variety of formats: school, key stage and class, and is led by staff, visitors and by the pupils themselves.

Right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. We expect that withdrawals will only be made following parental discussions with the Headteacher followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. This would also include the supervision to be provided in the event of withdrawal. All teachers, including the Headteacher, have the right to withdraw from the Act of Collective Worship, but the Headteacher remains legally accountable for Collective Worship within the school.

Aims

- To provide time set apart from other activities, when children can be aware of God, who loves and cares for them.
- To celebrate each unique individual member of the school community made in the image of God.
- To introduce the Christian faith in an attractive and fun way so that children have a positive experience of God and Christianity.
- To give children the opportunity to ask God for help, thank Him in prayer and to praise and worship Him with songs and dances.
- For children to learn about Jesus and the life He lived so they are encouraged by His example to live lives that please God, for their own and others' well-being and blessing.
- To give expression to, reaffirm, and practise the values of the school community.
- To provide an experience that promotes the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils.
- To promote personal and shared reflection and response to fundamental questions of life and those things that are of concern and value to human beings.
- To respect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.
- To celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
- To foster a respect for self and engender a concern for the needs of others.

Guidelines

1. Organisation

A daily Act of Collective Worship is held in the school. Acts of Collective worship may form all, or sometimes just part of, an assembly. Assemblies generally last around 15-20 minutes. The weekly pattern is as follows:

- Monday: Whole-school assemblies (2 halls)
Led by Headteacher/Deputy Head
- Tuesday: KS1/2 Class/Year assemblies, KS1/2 Singing assemblies
Led by teachers/children
- Wednesday: KS1, KS2 St Michael's Church assemblies
Led by St Michael's Church
- Thursday: KS1/2 Singing assemblies, KS1/2 Class/Year assemblies
Led by teachers/children
- Friday: Whole-school assemblies (2 halls) Celebration of Achievement
Led by Key Stage leaders

2. Planning

Collective Worship themes are planned on a two-year cycle. There are termly themes informed by the document 'Values for Life'. These broad themes are broken down into more specific weekly themes, the majority of which have a specifically Christian focus. Some themes are of a more general nature, eg: the environment, friendship, etc. (see attachment). The major Christian festivals (Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, Harvest) are at the core of the planning cycle.

A theme is introduced at the beginning of its cycle to the whole school, and then developed through Key Stage Assemblies and class assemblies. There is an assembly planner which highlights the key theme for the week and the main teaching points. Where possible songs are linked to the theme.

How our worship reflects the worship that takes place at St Michael's Church in Stoke Gifford, as well as the wider Anglican heritage.

1. The worship is lively, Christ-centred and led by the Holy Spirit.
2. The Bible is read for inspiration and learning.
3. Candles are used to encourage quiet reflection and to represent Jesus, The Light of the World, being with us.
4. Important dates in the Church's calendar are observed: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Harvest.
5. Songs reflect both modern and traditional elements.
6. The children learn the Lord's Prayer.
7. Reflection on Christian symbols and their use in worship.
8. Use of liturgical colours within some whole-school worships.

We believe that Collective Worship should be: inspiring; joyful; challenging; reflective; thankful; empathetic; peaceful and creative.

Children are encouraged to play an active role in assemblies: helping to set up the halls; waving flags at the beginning and end of the assemblies; by doing streamer dances during the singing; acting out roles; reading; leading singing; performing actions in songs etc.

Children regularly lead services at St Michael's Church, based round the key festivals. Year 6 children lead a special leavers' service at the end of the year.

The children play a significant role in leading class assemblies themselves, with the help and support of the Collective Worship Leader.

Collective Worship is an inclusive activity that builds links with the broad dimensions of the curriculum. Appropriate music, visual foci and symbols assist the creation of atmosphere. Story, drama, dance and art are important elements that engage the pupils' imagination and interest.

3. Resources

We have paid for a wide range of resources online from iSingPop including Classroom Worship and lively songs with dances. Each class has its own Bible. We also have lots of flags, and streamers for dances. Each class in Reception has a special Assembly box for their Classroom Worship which includes a puppet dog, a cloth, a candle, a Bible and a prayer book.

4. Display/Visual focus/Reflective Corners

Display plays a key role in Collective Worship. Themes and aims for the week are displayed in the foyer and in the classes. Proactive use of visual foci and artefacts is encouraged to stimulate interest and curiosity in the subject. There is a reflective area in the Library where prayer activities aim to stimulate thought and reflection and where children can write prayers to put on the Prayer Tree. These requests are prayed for by the church member, who comes in to pray for the school, and the Collective Worship leader. Posters and pictures around the school also aim to reinforce a sense of our values.

5. Commitment to Inclusion and Equality

All children have equal access to Collective Worship regardless of race, age, gender or ability, including physical. Where necessary, activities will be differentiated to meet individual needs. This is particularly the case in class assemblies. We encourage all members of the school community to participate and work closely with those parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw.

6. Opportunities for Spiritual, Social, Moral and Cultural Development

Collective Worship plays an important role in the promotion of all of these areas. We have incorporated the 'Values for Life' document into our Collective Worship planning along with a number of other core values.

7. Parental and community involvement: citizenship and community cohesion (*British Values*)

A major aspect running through our Collective Worship themes is how to be a good citizen. Community themes play a high-profile role, both local, and the wider community. Children are given opportunities to serve the local community; groups sing in the local Coffee Shop and Care Home as well as taking part in the village event at Christmas, Carols on the Green. Throughout the year we support a number of local, national, and international charities. People returning from missionary trips abroad come and speak to the children to inform and inspire them.

8. Visitors: Community links

We enjoy strong links with our Church, St Michael's. The church team lead a weekly act of Worship. These visits are planned to link in with our Worship themes.

These weekly assemblies (including 'Bring it to Life' assemblies) reflect the shared approach of Church and school in the choice of songs, style of communication, use of occasional liturgy including the Lord's prayer.

We also aim to use speakers from other community organisations, such as: The British Legion; various charities; the local library. The church worship team is coordinated by one of the Foundation governors, who in turn liaises with the CW subject leader.

St Michael's Church lead a termly RE lesson called "Reserve RE". This inspired by the Church of England's focus on understanding Christianity. We seek to develop pupils' own thinking and understanding of Christianity. We also explore weekly the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing pupils wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.

9. Parents

Parents are invited to attend services held in the church and to come along to the iSingPop performances, which follow a week of learning new songs and dances, held in the Church Centre.

How are parents informed about Collective Worship?

This policy will be highlighted in newsletters, and copies made available on the school website. Themes will also be notified to parents on the website and an article about the theme for the term is put in the regular newsletter that goes out to parents.

10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Development

The Foundation Governors are responsible for monitoring this policy. Collective Worship is a standing item on every agenda. More regular monitoring is carried out by the CW subject leader – this consists of discussions with children and staff, as well as observations of class and school worship. Parental views are also sought through the annual questionnaire.

Specific development in this area forms part of the School Improvement Plan as appropriate. The Collective

Worship Leader maintains their own action plan.

Training and Support

The Head teacher and CW subject leader have both received training in developing Collective Worship. Training is disseminated to staff through Inset and Staff Meetings. Further support is available from the subject leader, the vicar, and the Diocesan Board of Education.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at four-yearly intervals, or sooner as appropriate.

Reviewed by staff: September 2024

Agreed by Governors: September 2024

Review date: September 2027